

10 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW —AT A GLANCE!—ABOUT WRITING A RESEARCH PAPER

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RESOURCES

Consider the following:

- ❓ the library, and of course, the librarian/ media specialist
- ❓ dictionaries
- ❓ encyclopedias
- ❓ computer database
- ❓ audio-visual tapes
- ❓ online networks

YOUR TOPIC

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When choosing a topic.....

- ✓ make sure the topic interests you
- ✓ know the assigned length of the paper
- ✓ make sure there is enough information available on the topic

NOTE CARDS

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Keep these points in mind when completing your note cards.....

- only include a few ideas/facts per card
- all information should relate to the topic
- accuracy is crucial, especially with quotes and statistics
- always include specific sub-topic headings
- always include the page # where you found the information
- always include the number of the bibliography card that matches your notecard

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BIBLIOGRAPHY CARDS

Bib cards should include the following information.....

1. Name of the author
2. Title of the book or article
3. City of publication (book)
4. Name of the publisher (book)
5. Date (most recent year of publication)
6. Website (if from an online source)
7. # of bibliography card*

*Number your bib cards so you can refer to them by # on your note cards later.

THESIS STATEMENT

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The thesis statement.....

- A. clearly states your main idea
- B. helps you and your reader focus on the theme of the paper (which generally reveals your viewpoint on the topic, if it's a persuasive one)
- C. Should introduce 3 reasons (known as sub-points) to support your main point.
- D. Is placed at the end of your introductory paragraph

Sample Thesis Statement:

1. Bethany Hamilton was ¹ influenced by her family and her faith in God, ² struggled through many adversities caused by her shark attack, ³ yet she used her accomplishments to inspire faith and hope as *her legacy*.

OUTLINE

Follow these guidelines to complete your outline:

1. Write the title of your paper at the top of the page.
2. Follow the sample outline format for numbering and lettering. Each main topic must include at least two subtopics.
3. Do not place periods after topics or subtopics not stated in the form of a sentence.
4. Begin the main topic, subtopics, and details with capital letters.
5. Maintain a parallel (up & down) structure throughout the outline; if you start with phrases, don't switch to sentences.



Sample Outline Format:

Title

- I. Main topic
 - A. Subtopic 1
 - B. Subtopic 2
 - C. Subtopic 2
- II. Subtopic 1
 - A. Detail
 - 1. Even more specific detail
 - 2. Another specific detail
 - B. Detail
- III. Subtopic 2
 - A. Detail
 - 1. Specific detail
 - a. Example
 - b. Further explanation
 - 2. Specific Detail
- IV. Subtopic 3
 - A. Detail
 - 1. Specific detail
 - a. Example or further explanation



PARENTHETICAL DOCUMENTATION

Always give credit when you...

- ❖ Quote directly from a source.
- ❖ Paraphrase information from a source.

REVISIONS

When revising your working draft, remember to...

- ✓ Check for grammatical errors, such as spelling, punctuation, and word usage.
- ✓ Number all pages, except the title page, outline page, first page, and works cited page.
- ✓ Check for organization for logic, clarity and sequence.
- ✓ Check accuracy of all quotes.
- ✓ Check works cited for accuracy.
- ✓ Read the entire paper out loud to someone.



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FIRST DRAFT

When writing your first draft...

- ★ Focus on supporting your thesis statement.
- ★ Make sure your research backs up your thesis.
- ★ Maintain a consistent tone. (Don't be informal, or use subjective [opinionated] words.
- ★ Remember your audience.
- ★ Credit (document) your sources.



FINAL DRAFT

When completing your final draft, be sure you...

- ✓ Have an attention-grabbing title.
- ✓ Use the proper format while typing
- ✓ Check for neatness
- ✓ Double check grammar and other mechanics.
- ✓ Double check the rubric carefully to be sure you met all requirements.

